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The Catholic Layman.

DUBLIN, AUGUST, 1853.

"Well, it'll go hard with me before I take his word that Mr. Owens does not believe in God or in Jesus Christ," said Jem; "but what more, Pat?"

"Well, he said that they didn't care about the souls of the people at all, and that, with all the talk they made, they didn't want the people to turn Protestants at all, but only to pretend to do it; and that they give the people five pounds a piece only just to pretend it, and him getting five pounds for preaching that same sermon, as I heard tell."

"Well, stop there a bit, Pat," said Jem; "if the priest thought that the five pounds a piece was really going, would he give it out in the chapel that way? Doesn't he know there would be plenty to look for it, if it was to be got? and, if it was true, wouldn't he be more like to tell the people they wouldn't get the money at all, and they needn't go to look for it?"

"Well, signs by," said Pat, "I was up with Mr. Owens next day, and who should I see at the door but Molly Brady; and Mr. Owens comes out and asks her what she wants; 'your reverence,' says she, 'I'm a girl that wants to turn,' and so Mr. Owens began to talk to her about the reasons for turning; and Molly kept looking at him mighty hard; and at last, says she, 'but what are yees going to give me?' says she. 'So,' says Mr. Owens, 'we're going to give you the Word of God,' says he, 'that's able to save your soul.' 'And won't yees give me the five pounds?' says she: so when he told her that was all a lie, she went off in a huff; so I overtook her going back, 'and who told you that, Molly?' says I. 'Father John did,' says she. 'And will you believe Father John again?' says I. 'Why would I,' says she, 'when he made that fool of me? and wasn't I the fool to believe him at all?' says she, 'sure I might have knowned,' says she, 'that he never told one word of truth in his life, barring he mistook it for a lie,' says she.

"Aye," said Jem, "and didn't I hear of old Judy Callaghan, a while back, when Father John gave it out in the chapel that Mr. Owens would give a leg of mutton and a blanket to every woman in the parish that would turn? And up goes Judy to Mr. Owens, next day, and 'your reverence,' says she, 'I'm come to give myself up to you, for the leg of mutton and the blanket.' 'And my poor woman,' says he, 'is it possible you would sell your soul and your religion for a leg of mutton?' 'Oh, no, your reverence,' says she, 'oh, no, dear, not without the blanket!'"

"Well, Jem," says Pat, "I'm of your notion, that if the priests believed it themselves, they'd deny it in the chapel, in place of giving it out; but where's the use of talking, don't we know it's not true at all, and don't we know that what Mr. Owens wants is to get us to read the Bible, and to live by it?"

"Well, we know that anyway," said Jem; "but if it's all true what the Bible says of telling lies, what will be done with all the lies that's told in the chapel?"

"Well, it's hard to expect truth from them that tells lies," said Pat, "and I mind I read a speech in the newspaper, a while back, that said, the worst thing at all in the Irish was, that they mostly tell lies entirely, and won't tell a word of truth, if they can help it; and sure that's not far off the real thing."

"Aye," said Jem, "I thought that the other day, when I was at the fair of Ballybrack, and there was young Mr. Williams selling a horse, and he had old Peter McKenna with him, that sells for all the gentlemen, and there comes up a man and asks about the horse, and Mr. Williams just answers him fairly, and if you had seen how old Peter scoulded him afterwards; 'What made you go tell him the truth at all?' says he. 'Why; sure what I said did the horse no harm,' says Mr. Williams. 'And what do I care for harm or no harm?' says Peter; 'while you're a living man,' says he, 'never go for to tell one word of truth upon a street.' And, thinks I to myself, it's the rule of the street, sure enough, and it's liars we are entirely."

"And what else would we be," said Pat, "when we know nothing at all of what God says of the judgment on liars, and when we see the priest tell lies himself at the altar of God? Sure, is there a man in the chapel that knows that God says, that all liars shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone? and is not that enough to show that the people ought to have the Bible, to know what God says, and what God will do?"

Who knows but that Pat and Jem, and many a poor man like them, may help to bring the Irish people to a knowledge of these things?

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

All letters to be addressed to the Editor, 9, Upper Sackville-st.

No anonymous letter can be attended to. Whatever is sent for insertion must be authenticated by the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee for his good faith.

We would request our valued correspondents, both Roman Catholics and Protestants, to limit the length of their communications, and not to discuss a variety of distinct topics in one letter.

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In our number for June, we gave a letter from our valued and able correspondent, Mr. M'Manus, in which he appeals to Pascal, among others, as a witness and instance of the power of the religion of the Church of Rome upon the hearts of men.

In our last number we pointed out the remarkable fact, that Mr. M'Manus should have taken as an instance a nominal member of the Church of Rome, who was almost, or entirely, such as we are in doctrine.

He is not singular in this: most Roman Catholic controversialists, when called on to show the fruits of their church's teaching, do appeal to Pascal, as one of their chief instances. We think it, therefore, a matter of interest to inquire into the doctrine and position of this celebrated man.

At the time of the Reformation, there were many dissatisfied with the corruptions of the Church of Rome beside those who actually joined the Reformation. Many, who could not make up their minds to leave her, did earnestly long to correct her doctrines and practices. Many, even of the bishops at the Council of Trent, did actually advocate very Protestant notions in the council.

To meet this state of things, THE ORDER OF JESUITS was created, and they have since proved the main support of modern Romanism. Their chief business was, to watch and hunt down every tendency to Protestant doctrine among the members of the Church of Rome.

In the year 1640, there was published, at Louvain, a book, called "Augustinus," written by Jansenius, Roman Catholic Bishop of Ypres, who had died about two years before. This book was a compilation of the doctrines of the great St. Augustine, respecting the grace of God in the salvation of man. It was eminently Protestant and spiritual in its character. The Jesuits immediately attacked it; they succeeded in having it condemned by the University of the Sorbonne in Paris, and by repeated Bulls of various Popes. But there were many whose hearts sighed for the religion of the grace of God, and those were resolute in adhering to the doctrine of this book, against all the power and persecution of Jesuits and Popes. They were, of course, denounced as heretics by the Church of Rome, and are still denounced by it as heretics, for they still exist; yet they themselves have always said, that they did not separate from the Church of Rome; that all they wanted was, to hold the doctrines of grace in her communion. But that Church has always denounced "the Jansenists" (as they are called, from Jansenius), as heretics; and yet, strange to say, has never been able to drive them out of her communion, for persons holding these opinions have often been, not only members, but priests, and bishops too, in the Church of Rome, which Roman Catholics ought to remember when they boast of the unity of doctrine in their Church.

Among those who embraced the doctrine of Jansenius was the famous abbey of Port Royal in France, with its Abbess and all its Nuns, the two brothers of the Abbess, Henri Arnauld, Bishop of Anger, and Antoine Arnauld, Doctor of the Sorbonne, St. Cyran, the spiritual director of the abbey, and many others renowned for their piety and learning, such as Le Maitre, De Sacy, Nicole, &c., &c., and among the rest Blaise Pascal.

Pascal was a Jansenist, and as such a heretic to the Church of Rome, though her controver-

sialists are so fond of claiming credit to themselves for his progress in the grace of God.

He is chiefly known to us now by his famous "Provincial Letters," which were written to expose the Jesuits, and to maintain the cause of the Jansenists against them; and a fearful picture he gives of the institution, the policy, and the principles of the Jesuits in carrying out the objects for which their order was created.

It is not their object to destroy morality, but neither is it their object to preserve it; that would be bad policy. Their design is to have all consciences subject to themselves. Since evangelical and severe maxims are suited to govern some characters, they provide accordingly for them; since the majority of men demand a lax and easy religion, they provide that for them. So they need teachers of both kinds, to suit all sorts of men, and give every one what he wishes for. By this obliging and accommodating conduct they embrace all. If they meet a penitent resolved to restore what he has stolen, they praise and confirm his resolution; but if one come to them who wishes to have absolution without restoring what he has stolen, it will go hard but they will find some way to manage that for him. By this they preserve all their friends, and defend themselves against all their enemies. If one reproach them for laxity, they immediately produce some books of their stricter devotion, and the simple, who do not look deep into matters, are content with such proofs.

This is an abstract of Pascal's statement, of the object and means of the Jesuits, in his "Fifth Letter."

And hence, says Pascal, we may understand why the Jesuits have such low notions of the grace of God; "for their morality is WHOLLY PAGAN, and nature alone is sufficient to observe it."

He gives fearful and abundant proofs, out of the books of the chief men of the order, of the truth of this fearful charge.

First, he shows their "doctrine of probability," as they call it. Their greatest writers say, that they are all agreed that if what men do is *probably right*, if there be a *probability* that it is right or lawful, that is enough to justify the conscience against sin. And they say further, that the opinion of one grave and learned author in favour of an action, is proof enough that it is, probably, lawful, and may, therefore, be done without sin. And then he shows that there is not a crime that can be thought of that has not some great Jesuit writer at hand to say that it is lawful, and may be done without sin! Thus he shows (letter seven) that numbers of their greatest authors maintain that it is lawful for a gentleman to kill on the spot any one who strikes him a blow, in order to preserve his honour; that it is lawful to fight a duel to preserve his honour; that it is lawful for servants to steal, if they think their wages too small; that priests and monks may lawfully kill those who injure them or their order; that it is lawful to kill those who speak ill of us, if we cannot stop them in any other way; that it is lawful to circulate false slanders against those who we fear may hurt us; that it is not the duty of Christians to avoid the immediate occasion of sin, if their doing so should give a handle for people talking, or be inconvenient to them.

Of these, and many other such maxims that he produces from their books, Pascal occasionally says such things as these—"Are they priests who speak them? are they Christians? are they Turks? are they men? are they devils?"—Letter 14. And again, "It is to be wished that those horrid maxims had never come forth out of hell; and that the devil, who was their first author, had never found men sufficiently devoted to his orders to publish them among Christians."

He shows, also, that it is a rule of the Jesuits,

that every confessor is bound, under mortal sin, to give absolution, even against his own conscience, to every one who can produce one of their authors to justify his crime!—Letter 5.

But it is upon the question of the necessity of loving God that Pascal is more indignant against the doctrine of the Jesuits than on any other. In his tenth letter, he reckons up all their opinions on the question—"At what time is a man obliged to have actual love to God?" One says, "before he dies;" another, "at the moment of death;" another, "when he is baptized;" another, "on festival days;" another says, "all these are wrong;" another says, "once a year;" another, "once every three or four years;" another, "every five years;" another says, "it is *probable* that he is not rigorously obliged to every five years;" another says, "the command is not so much to love God, as not to hate him!"

On this Pascal says, "They go to reverse the whole law of God. They violate the great commandment, which contains the law and the prophets; they attack piety at the heart; they take from it the spirit that gives it life; they say that the love of God is not necessary to salvation; . . . they take off the anathema which St. Paul pronounces against those who love not the Lord Jesus Christ; they destroy what St. John says—that he who loves not the Lord Jesus Christ abides in death; . . . thus they make worthy of enjoying God through eternity, those who never loved him all their lives! Behold the mystery of iniquity fulfilled."

We ask our readers to remember that we are here expressing no opinion of our own either for or against the Jesuits.

But we find Pascal appealed to by our correspondent as a proof that it is the Church of Rome that possesses the religion of the heart, and when we turn to his writings we find indeed that he did possess the true religion of the heart, the doctrine of the Gospel of the grace of God. But we find also the whole machinery of the Church of Rome—Popes, Cardinals, Colleges, Jesuits, all striving every nerve to crush this doctrine both in him and in those who taught him. We find him, in letters which for learning and proof, and wit and temper, have never been equalled in controversy, convicting them of destroying the very foundations of religion and morality. Yes, we find the Pope and the Church of Rome using all their power to the utmost to sustain these Jesuits against him, and to extinguish him and all other Jansenists. We find that the Jesuits are, day by day, getting more and more dominion over the Roman Church; and our chief desire is to revive among Roman Catholics that religion of the heart which Pascal so eminently possessed.

A copy of a Tuam newspaper has been forwarded to us, containing a correspondence between the Rev. James Fowler, the curate of that town, and Mr. Lockhart, formerly of Oxford, and now a Roman Catholic clergyman. We cannot afford space to insert this correspondence in our columns, and content ourselves with giving a brief account of the substance of it. Mr. Lockhart, it seems, in arguing against the position that Scripture is our sole rule of faith, named certain doctrines which, he asserted, were essential parts of the Christian faith, and which were yet incapable of Scriptural proof. On the general line of argument here adopted by Mr. Lockhart we may observe that it is more calculated to make men unbelievers than to make them Roman Catholics; for if he could succeed in showing Protestants that doctrines which they had been accustomed to receive as essential parts of their faith did not in reality rest on Scriptural authority, most of them would be more disposed to reject the doctrines than to receive them without such proof. He is not the only Roman

Catholic, however, who is fond of using this "kill or cure" remedy; too many of the advocates of the Roman Catholic Church, in this respect, resembling the woman whom Solomon discovered not to be the mother of the child she claimed, by her readiness to suffer it to be slain, if it were not to belong to her.

To this challenge, however, of Mr. Lockhart's Mr. Fowler replied, by referring to a number of Scripture texts, as containing the proofs required by Mr. Lockhart. The latter retorted, with an examination of Mr. Fowler's Scripture proofs, arriving at the result that not one of them was conclusive. Thereupon Mr. Fowler replied, by printing his previous letter, in parallel columns, with passages out of the Catechism of the Council of Trent, from which he had purposely borrowed the proofs in question. Mr. Lockhart still persisted in denying that the proofs were valid, and the (Roman Catholic) editor of the Tuam paper triumphed over Mr. Fowler as if he were unable to prove his doctrines on Protestant grounds, and were obliged to have recourse to Roman Catholic authorities.

It appears to us, however, that if a proof be good, it remains good, no matter who makes use of it. If what the Catechism of the Council of Trent puts forward as Scripture proofs be so in reality, they will be so still in the mouths of Protestants. And even if a Protestant were to borrow his Scriptural arguments from Roman Catholic authorities, he would still argue on Protestant grounds, as long as the arguments were founded on Scripture only.

But this correspondence of Mr. Lockhart's suggests to us an important reflection. We discover here that the Scripture proofs put forward by the Catechism of the Council of Trent, for doctrines which Protestants and Roman Catholics hold in common, are not regarded by Roman Catholics as proofs at all. They receive the doctrines on the authority of the Council, and not because they can be proved from Scripture, or, at least, they take it on the Council's authority that the texts in question *are* proofs. These proofs are like the pillars which architects sometimes place, for ornament, in front of their buildings, which, though they appear to be props for support, are, in reality, part of the structure to be supported.

Now, the reflection arises, may it not be the same with what Roman Catholics put forward as Scripture proofs of doctrines which Protestants do not hold? Are we not, perhaps, wasting our labour in showing that the texts brought forward in support of Purgatory or prayers to the saints do not, in reality, prove these doctrines? Probably, if we held these doctrines ourselves, and were to attempt to bring forward the same texts in support of them, Mr. Lockhart and his friends would then discover that the texts did not prove the doctrines at all, and that the authority of their Church is, in reality, the sole support which these doctrines have. We shall consider this matter hereafter.

ON THE INTERNAL EVIDENCES OF THE CATHOLIC RELIGION.

WE promised to consider, in this number, "whether the Church of Rome or the Church of England and Ireland professes the religion most suited to supply the real wants of fallen man."

We might have offered arguments from various sources to throw light upon this question; but we cannot now. Things that are seen with our eyes and felt with our hearts leave no place for argument; and the writer of this, within the last few days, and the last few hours, has witnessed scenes in which it has been given him to see with his eyes, that the Gospel which we preach "is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth."—Rom. i. 16.

He has seen a man in the prime of life brought down in a brief period to the grave—one who filled a position of extensive influence, honoured and beloved by all around him, and adorning every relation in life; the head of a large and united family, who, under his ceaseless care and

cheerful influence, afforded the brightest example of domestic happiness.

Oh, what a change, to see this strong man struck down, laid low by pain and weakness; to see that happy family all weeping now; to see his partner in a union whose happiness no shade had ever darkened, as she appeared to treasure up each failing breath that brought it to a close!

It was a time to try the religion of that man and family, and of the Church that taught them; it was a time to try if their's were the religion of the heart; if that religion had power to support him in that so sudden passage from this world's truest joys to that dark descent, that unknown journey, at which our nature shudders; it was a time to try if that religion could support them in that greatest of all earthly trials, that approaching desolation of that so happy home.

That face that so long had beamed, and made so many other faces beam with happiness—so sadly changed by suffering and pain—yet still more changed in this, that earthly happiness had given place to smiles of heavenly joy. All earthly thoughts were put away; no care of earthly things disturbed that breast; the objects of his earthly love were given up with cheerful confidence to the Heavenly Father's care and love, to Him whose everlasting love was felt and known.

One only thought and care for them remained—for wife, for children, servants, all whom he had cared for with such earnest care; and that thought was, to tell, to warn, to entreat them all, with all the fervour of a final parting—with all the calmness of an everlasting union—of that which gave him peace and joy in nature's final struggle, of that which he declared *would never fail them*, though all earthly joys should fail.

And then, to see those gushing sorrows all around him hushed into a calmness and tranquillity almost approaching to his own—to see grief itself compelled to rejoice, *because he was happy then!*

This was indeed to see and feel that the Gospel is indeed the power of God to them that believe.

And what did this? What caused this dawn of heavenly joy to shine out of that utter darkness of all human happiness? He told it himself to the writer of these lines. These were his words—"All that ever I did seems to me now no better than filthy rags in the sight of God. All my hope and confidence is in Christ my Saviour; and in Christ my Saviour I have hope, and peace, and joy."

And this faith was the source of light arising out of darkness—of joy striving against sorrow, alike in them that lived and in him that died.

Had Mr. M^{an} witnessed this striking scene, could he have said, in presence of such evidence of the grace and power of God, that the Church of which this man was a faithful member had only "set before his mind a dry and barren abstraction of a Deity—had held forth an empty vessel to the parched and thirsty wanderer in the desert—had stripped Christianity of all that can make it lovely and attractive?"

Had she not led him rather to an all-sufficient Saviour, who is able to keep that which is committed to him? (2 Tim. i. 12.) and to drink out of the river of the water of life, that proceedeth out of the throne of God and of the Lamb?—Rev. xxii. 1.

What else was wanting, then, to make faith a victory that overcometh the world?—1 John v. 4.

Was it masses for dead, to be offered over and over again, year by year continually, and thus proclaiming, by their own vain repetition, that they cannot satisfy? What sacrifice can then best satisfy the soul?—"Christ, who was offered ONCE, to exhaust the sins of many."—Hebrews ix. 28, Douay Bible. Who "by one oblation hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."—Heb. x. 14. Or, "the self-same sacrifices, which they offer continually every year, (and which) can never make the comers thereunto perfect, for then they would have ceased to be offered."—Heb. x. 1, 2.

Or what was wanting then to complete the consolation that religion gave to that family under their greatest trial? Whether was it happier for them then to believe, with the Church of Rome, that those sharp but brief pains were but the entrance into ages, perhaps, of agonizing torture—ages which the Church of Rome gives no means to calculate, of which she never gives security that the torture is over, lest no more masses should be paid for—or to believe in the Word of God—the voice from heaven—"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. From henceforth now, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours."—Apoc. or Rev. xiv. 13, Douay Bible.

Many such dying scenes it has been the writer's privilege to witness; and from his heart and from the evidence of his senses he can repel the assertion, that his is "a cold and lifeless system, unable to make any solid impression on the heart and affections."

If any should be moved to say in his heart, on reading this account—"May I die the death of the righteous, and may my last end be like his," let him seek for that righteousness which Paul, the chief of sinners, found; "not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."—Philip. iii. 9.

If any would find the "peace at the last," which this man found, let him seek it through life, as this man sought it, by "believing in Jesus."